

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 4486

DEPT PASS AIFLD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PN, ELAB

SUBJ: CHRISTIAN LABOR GROUP REQUESTS AIFLD

ASSISTANCE

REF: PANAMA 4485

SUMMARY: LEADER OF CHRISTIAN ORIENTED LABOR ORGANIZATION HAS REQUESTED AIFLD ASSISTANCE FOR EDUCATION COURSES. MISSION HAS AUTHORIZED AIFLD PANAMA DIRECTOR TO USE UP TO \$8,000 OF PRESENTLY AVAILABLE AND UNCOMMITTED FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE. END SUMMARY

1. JULIO CESAR PINZON, SECRETARY GENERAL OF CHRISTIAN-ORIENTED CENTRAL ISTMEN DE TRABAJADORES (CIT), DURING MEETING JULY 30 WITH AIFLD PANAMA DIRECTOR AND DEAN BUTCHER, SECRETARY GENERAL OF AIFLD-SUPPORTED CONFEDERACION DE TRABAJADORES DE LA REPUBLICA DE PANAMA (CTRP), MADE UNPRECEDENTED PROPOSAL AND REQUEST. PROPOSAL FOR JOINT ACTION AGAINST COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN GOP LABOR STUDIES INSTITUTE WAS REPORTED REFTEL. REQUEST WAS FOR AIFLD COOPERATION IN FINANCING FOUR LABOR COURSEF FOR CIT.

2. AS REPORTED PANAMA A-42 OF FEB. 26, AND A-59 OF MARCH 25, 1974 PINZON HAS PROVIDED CIT WITH SKILLED AND AT TIMES DARING LEADERSHIP AND HAS BEEN ACCESSABLE
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TO EMBASSY OFFICERS AND AIFLD DIRECTOR. IN CONTRAST

TO CHRISTIAN-ORIENTED LABOR LEADERSHIP IN SOME OTHER COUNTRIES, CIT IN PANAMA HAS NOT EMPHASIZED ANTI-US VIEWS.

3. BUTCHER AGREED TO DESIRABILITY OF PROVIDING FUNDING FOR COURSES FOR CIT PROVIDED THAT NO FUNDS PRESENTLY DESIGNATED FOR CTRP'S OWN EDUCATION PROGRAM WOULD BE DIRECTED TO CIT. AIFLD PANAMA DIRECTOR HAS INFORMED EMBASSY/AID HE COULD FINANCE COURSES COSTING UP TO \$8,000 WITHOUT AFFECTING COMMITMENTS ALREADY MADE WITH CTRP. FUNDING FOR CIT COURSES WOULD BE CHanneled THROUGH CTRP IN SAME MANNER AS FUNDING OF COURSES FOR CTRP AFFILIATES. WHILE NO ADDITIONAL FUND REQUEST IS BEING MADE AT THIS TIME, WE ANTICIPATE THAT PURSUIT OF THIS NEW OPENING MAY WARRANT INCREASE IN FUTURE.

4. ASSISTANCE TO CIT IS IN ACCORD WITH RECOMMENDATIONS MADE DURING JUNE 21 PANAMANIAN PROGRAM EVALUATION. THIS IS ECELLLENT OPPORTUNITY TO STRENGTHEN TIES BETWEEN MAJOR ELEMENTS OF NON-COMMUNIST LABOR MOVEMENT IN PANAMA. JORDEN

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED AIFLD.

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